

ENHANCEMENT OF THE NATIONAL DEFENCE POSTURE BY USING THE MILITARY POWER

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Abstract

The development of a national defence enhanced posture is a fundamental requirement in line with the developments of the current and possible future security environment, as well as regards the commitments made at North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and European Union (EU) level in relation with the development of capabilities and contributions to missions and operations. Romanian Army prepares, integrates at national level and, if necessary, makes use, in accordance with the law, of all available resources. While peacekeeping or peace-building operations are presented in the various defence and national security strategies as the last resort, the last option after all other measures have been actively explored, it remains in the eyes of public opinion and policy makers the first face of the armed forces, the heart of the profession of soldier. The conventional deterrence has always existed – if *vis pacem para bellum*. Two main mechanisms can discourage a potential opponent. The first is the threat of retaliation, also known as deterrence by punishment. The second mechanism consists in persuading him of the impossibility, or at least of great practical difficulty, of achieving his immediate objectives, thus prompting him to give up not for fear of the consequences of his action, but due to his low chances of success. The guarantee of sovereignty, independence and state unity, the territorial integrity of the country and constitutional democracy is the most fundamental task of the armed forces. It is, after all, the primary role of defending the land of the homeland when it is threatened. The most obvious expression of that is the concept of ensuring the capacity to implement defence plans drawn up at national level.

Keywords: enhanced national defence posture; military power; military capabilities; intervention and stabilization; deterring and preventing; protect and anticipate.

THE NEED FOR A NATIONAL DEFENCE ENHANCED POSTURE

The concept of "national defence enhanced posture" (National Defence Strategy of Romania 2020-2024 2020), recently surfaced into Romanian defence policy, is defined as a set of actions intended to "strengthen its role as an allied state and regional actor actively participating in euro-Atlantic and international security" (National Defence Strategy of Romania 2020-2024 n.d.).

The current global security environment is characterised by an increased change in the balance of power within the international system and a move towards a layered multipolar system with global or regional power centres.

This leads to an increased perception of strategic uncertainty and unpredictability. Intensification of strategic competition in areas of interest in the Romania's neighbourhood, generate "a complex regional security context with a broad spectrum of risks and threats to vital national interests" (Romanians White Book n.d.).

Therefore, the development of a national defence enhanced posture is a fundamental requirement in line with the developments in the security environment, including at regional level, as well as regarding the commitments made at North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and European

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Union (EU) level, in relation with the development of capabilities and contributions to missions and operations. In this respect, the national effort involves "the development of robust and resilient national defence capability packages, interoperable, flexible and efficient" (2. p. Romanians White Book n.d.).

They are intended to deter an aggression against Romania and to prepare an adequate response to the current and possible future security environment, in order to carry out the constitutional missions of the Romanian Armed Forces.

MILITARY POWER – STRATEGIC APPROACH

Romanian Army, as the leading force of the Romania military power, "is subordinated exclusively to the will of the people" (Romania Constitution n.d.). It has the sacred mission to guarantee and defend the fundamental values and interests of the Romanian people and state, in accordance with the provisions of the Romanian Constitution. Romanian Army prepares, integrates at national level and, if necessary, makes use, in accordance with the law, of all available resources. At the same time, it has the mission to materialise the national contribution to the NATO's collective defence framework, along the lines of operational commitments made as a member state of the EU, as well as for participation in the peace operations and missions under umbrella of United Nations Organization (UN) or coalitions of will.

These requirements are met through specific missions and tasks that are detailed in the following sections.

Interventions and stabilization – participation in peacekeeping and peace-building operations

While peacekeeping or peace-building operations or shortly said «intervention operations» are presented in the various defence and national security strategies as the last resort, the last option after all other measures have been actively explored, its remain in the eyes of public opinion and policy makers the first face of the armed forces, the heart of the profession of soldier. Intervention, that is an armed action, remains at the heart of military identity, with other functions merely strengthening or derived from this initial ability to use force.

Romanian Army could accomplish these missions only under the umbrella of an international organization. As an example, there are three basic criteria in international law, under which NATO can act as an international political and military cooperation organization. These are: in collective defence against an attack on one of the member countries, as defined by the North Atlantic Treaty Article 5; as a crisis management tool, based on a United Nations Security Council (UNSC) provided mandate adopted under Chapter VII of the UN Charter (also referred to as the Charter); or based on an intervention by invitation (Handbooks n.d.) of the legitimate government of the host-nation state.

The intervention is, as the Romanian doctrine understands, the initial phase of an operation and it implies a projection of forces outside the national territory through air, maritime or even ground means. While ground forces appear to play only a secondary role in first-entry operations, two notable exceptions exist through amphibious landings and airborne operations that mix naval and air domains with land, respectively. Both are considered strategic operations when they are aimed at seizing a base that could constitute a «bridgehead» - typically an airport or a deep-water port - that would then safely project enough means to alter the overall balance of power.

It is clear that these modes of action have been relatively little used over the past three decades, in part because of their high cost, difficulty in implementing them and the risks associated with them. Moreover, post-Cold War geopolitical conditions have provided armed forces with relatively easy diplomatic access to areas adjacent to the theatre. Examples are the deployment of US forces to Saudi Arabia in 1990 or Kuwait, in 2003 – or even in the theatre itself due to the presence of a local ally – such as the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan in 2001 – thus avoiding such risky ventures. Beyond these problems of first-entry, the development of the denial of access threat has also led to questioning the assumption of control of common spaces and thus conducting to the dependence on naval, air and informational capabilities.

As the projection is completed, the intervention may continue through a phase of combat or coercion. The latter has long been the heart of a Western strategic thinking characterized by the direct strategy in which the destruction of enemy armed forces remained the main means to constrain the will of an adversary.

From this perspective, armed forces naturally play its role. However, it will vary depending on the means and modes of action implemented by the adversary as well as the political objectives of the intervention. During the 1990s, from the Balkans to Iraq, it was thus possible to see that when the objective was limited to banning an area to the adversary, or to force it to renounce to the violence, the air power alone could achieve the bulk of the major effect.

On the other hand, since the objective was more ambitious, like the "regime change" (Cirincione 2003) sought by the United State of America (US) in Iraq in 2003, the need for control of the land domain required the use of ground troops.

The military history of recent campaigns shows overall a good Western «military effectiveness» in the intervention phase itself - thus including projection and coercion. Nevertheless, many strategists agree on the mediocrity of the «strategic effectiveness» of these interventions. This is the question asked by a group of RAND Corporation researchers based on the US military experience over the period 2001-2014. In the final report, *Improving Strategic Competence: Lessons from 13 Years of War*, they identify seven key lessons. One of these is the importance of anticipating and planning for the needs of "stability operations, capacity-building, transition, and, if necessary, counterinsurgency" (others 2014). It thus appears that stabilization is just as necessary, but much more difficult to implement, than the intervention itself to ensure the success of an operation. Indeed, the skills required to conduct the stabilization phase are essentially within the operational ground domain, since the latter aims to "restore the minimum viability conditions of a state and ending of violence as a mode of protest and laying the groundwork for a return to normal life by launching a civil process of reconstruction." (French Joint Doctrine 2013)

In a 2017 paper entitled "Small Footprint, Small Payoff" (S. Biddle 12 April 2017) researchers Stephen Biddle, Julia Macdonald and Ryan Baker identified three dilemmas that hinder the effectiveness of such an approach. In all three cases, there are asymmetries, but this time no longer between the interventionist power and his opponent, but between the intervener, called "principal" in the micro-economic terminology of the study, and his local partner, called "agent", who is supposed to implement the strategy on the ground in order to minimize the footprint of the former.

The first dilemma refers to an asymmetry of interest: while the "principal" seeks to stabilize the country according to his own interests, his conception often runs up against the interests of the "agent". Typically, through the implementation of democratic or anti-corruption reforms that seem necessary to the "principal". However, sometimes its threaten the interests of the "agent" more directly than the adversary himself would.

The second dilemma is an information asymmetry: the "agent" is by definition better informed of the situation on the ground. Moreover, as the person is following the strategy for which he is receiving assistance involves important means that, as they grow, make the delegation of powers less attractive.

The verification of the "agent's" compliance with the "principal's" interests is only useful if there is a conditionality of the assistance granted. This is the third and final dilemma. To function, conditionality requires double credibility: maintaining aid if implementation is in line with expectations and cutting it off if it does not. However, the experience of recent years shows that it is extremely difficult to maintain this double credibility: after investing large sums of money and committing its prestige, the "principal" can sometimes hardly weigh on his "agent". Conversely, if he threatens too seriously with disengagement, he harms the relationship with his partner, maintaining distrust and ultimately the merits of his assistance.

The consequence of these dilemmas of the minimalist approach is simply the lack of "control" exerted by the intervening power over the situation on the ground. This defect may result in inefficiency, but it can also lead to political risks. The "principal" can thus be liable against his will by the behaviour of the "agent".

Deterring and preventing – contribution to collective defence

The Brussels Summit Declaration, July 2018 reaffirmed that "as a means to prevent conflict and war, credible deterrence and defence is essential and will continue to be based on an appropriate mix of nuclear, conventional, and missile defence capabilities. A robust deterrence and defence posture strengthens Alliance cohesion and provides an essential political and military transatlantic link, through an equitable and sustainable distribution of roles, responsibilities, and burdens" (Brussels Summit Declaration 11-12 July 2018).

As a strategic concept, deterrence is not defined by specific means but as the ability to deter a potential aggressor from taking a particular action. The conventional deterrence has always existed – if *vis pacem para bellum*. Two main mechanisms can discourage a potential opponent. The first is the threat of retaliation, also known as deterrence by punishment. It consists of threatening to inflict "unacceptable damages" on those who would attack a perimeter of interests previously defined in a more or less ambiguous manner. A second mode of action exists, deterrence by denial, which may complement a deterrence in retaliation. This second mechanism consists not in threatening the aggressor with punishment but in persuading him regarding the impossibility, or at least of great practical difficulty, of achieving his immediate objectives, thus prompting him to give up not for fear of the consequences of his action, but by his low chances of success. Armed forces can help to make each of these two mechanisms credible.

The effectiveness of deterrence in retaliation is based on three elements: the operational capacity to carry out such damage, the political will to inflict and bear the consequences in terms of escalation, and finally the ability to convince the adversary of the credibility of this threat. In order to strengthen the credibility of this concept, weakened by the asymmetry of interests, deterrence strategists have developed various mechanisms, including the use of advanced forces as a "detonator" (tripwire).

This is underlined by the deployment of NATO's rotational force in the three Baltic countries and Poland decided at the Warsaw Summit in 2016. The latter was put in place in the context of Russian aggression in Ukraine and while the credibility of the Atlantic Alliance in a similar scenario involving a member state could appear to be diminished - at least in the minds of Russian decision-makers. In the absence of a tripwire, the credibility of a threat of retaliation against such an assault was much more questionable.

It is in part to deal with this scenario that the members of the Atlantic Alliance have decided to strengthen their presence in the Baltic States through the deployment of the Enhanced Forward Presence (eFP), a ground force generated on a rotational basis but deployed permanently. These four battlegroups of just over a thousand men each representing some 15 Member States embody the alliance's ongoing commitment alongside its allies most vulnerable to Russia's attempts at strategic intimidation. By their mere presence on the ground, they deprive a potential adversary of any certainty as to its ability to sustain the war on a limited scale.

Despite all its virtues, the mechanism of tripwire gives way to a dose of uncertainty. While they significantly raise the cost of an assault and make reprisals more credible, the 4,000-strong eFP is not, strictly speaking, a difficult obstacle that can drastically reduce the military feasibility of such an attack. If, despite all the aggressor countries, Russia in this example, agreed to take responsibility for an escalation, placing the West in front of the *fait accompli* and challenging it to "risk" Paris, London or Washington to save Tallinn, then deterrence by reprisal could reach its limits.

NATO has also developed tailored Forward Presence (tFP) in the Black Sea region. In Romania, a multinational framework brigade for training Allies' land forces is now in place, and work is underway to develop further the brigade's capacity to contribute to the Alliance's strengthened deterrence and defence posture. A number of air and maritime measures in the Black Sea region have led to a substantial increase in NATO's presence and maritime activity in the Black Sea (Brussels Summit Declaration 11-12 July 2018).

In order to compensate the balance, a containment deterrence strategy can complement the "blind spots" of deterrence in retaliation, particularly in a collective defence context. In this case, it would involve deploying a force powerful enough to effectively repel a conventional aggression or, at

the very least, raise the cost sufficiently to make it unattractive. The benefit of such an approach on retaliation deterrence is that if the deterrence were to fail the prevention force would be more likely to engage in conflict than a retaliatory force obeying the escalatory logic of all or nothing. On the other hand, a strategy of deterrence by conventional ban results in a high cost of implementation, especially in its ground component. It obviously depends on the opposing means and the balance of power, but it seems clear that in Eastern Europe today against Russia, only heavy forces (armoured cavalry, artillery, mechanized infantry) and many would be able to prevent such aggression.

On the other hand, because it is closer to a logic of employment, deterrence by denial is not without risk. For example, there is ambiguity about its use that can be both defensive and offensive. If it were to be interpreted as such by the power that one seeks to deter, then the whole manoeuvre will have been counterproductive since it would appear as a provocation, that is, an incitement to aggression that is precisely being sought to prevent.

Such an approach cannot, however, work without relying on a retaliatory nuclear deterrent whose credibility is enhanced as the prohibition measures put in place increase - in this respect, a prohibition force is a de facto important tripwire. Conversely, a prohibition force without the capacity for retaliation will never be a complete deterrent: an adversary can always hope to rise to the challenge and achieve its gains.

Strategic intimidation actually presents itself as one of the possible modes of action of the prevention function. While it shares with deterrence the fact that it seeks to prevent the outbreak of armed conflict, prevention extends far beyond vital interests, to include the preservation of limited interests such as maintaining the stability of a given area or respecting international standards. Intimidation is arguably the most aggressive form of crisis prevention in that it relies, like deterrence, on the mechanism of threat.

Unlike deterrence, on the other hand, it is not a threat of defensive action or retaliation, but a threat of offensive action, i.e. an intervention. The criteria of operational credibility then converge with the capabilities of the intervention function.

As in a deterrence, the credibility of an attempt at intimidation is not limited to the operational ability to carry out a threat. It also requires a demonstration of political will and understanding by the adversary. In order to do this, strategic intimidation, in addition to political-diplomatic means, can carry out military activities signalling the reality of the threat. While NATO has rarely resorted to such warnings, Russia has made effective use of such warnings during the Ukraine crisis. For example, when Ukraine launched its "anti-terrorist operation" in 2015 to recapture the separatist provinces of Donetsk and Luhansk, Moscow carried out large-scale exercises and deployed ground forces on the Ukrainian borders, ultimately leading to threats to the completion of the operation.

Protect and anticipate – guarantee the sovereignty, independence and state unity, the territorial integrity of the country and constitutional democracy

Of all the strategic functions of the military power, protection is perhaps the most fundamental of the armed forces: it is, after all, the primary role of defending the land of the homeland when it is threatened. The most obvious expression of this is the concept of "ensuring the capacity to implement defence plans drawn up at national level" (2. p. Romanians White Book n.d.), whose concept dates back to the immediate post-war period and which aims not only to protect the country from a foreign invasion, but also against a possible hybrid enemy, infiltrated or insurgent.

"The aggressive behaviour of the Russian Federation, the militarization of the Black Sea region and the hybrid actions carried out by the Russian Federation, aimed at maintaining a tense and insecure climate in the area close to our country" (National Defence Strategy of Romania 2020-2024), is leading Romania to continue firmly the extensive process of building robust deterrence and defence capabilities, beginning in 2015. This process is carried out together with the increase of the armed forces interoperability with allies and the strengthening of the institutional capacity to counter hybrid actions.

For Romania, the definition of ways to ensure national security is achieved through the interaction between national potential and posture and the effort and collective contribution of security

development management, assumed at multilateral level, primarily in NATO and in the EU. This paradigm requires the continuous adaptation of national risk and threat management capacity, with a focus on the interaction and synergy component between the tools and capabilities that can be engaged at national level. As a result, "the main guarantor of Romania's security is the national defence capability, intrinsically matched by NATO membership" (National Defence Strategy of Romania 2020-2024 n.d.).

To consolidate this approach, Romania is strengthening military cooperation with the US, not only in the allied format, but also especially as an operational objective to be implemented on the national territory. Subsumed, our efforts are directed towards the deployment on its territory of means to strengthen NATO's forward presence and so, to discourage possible aggressive actions by some state actors. These efforts are combined with those undertaken at national level "to increase military mobility capacity" (National Defence Strategy of Romania 2020-2024 n.d.), an objective undertaken at the level of Europe by NATO, through the implementation of the Enablement Plan of the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) Area of Responsibility (AOR) and Reinforcement Strategy. In the meantime the military mobility is among the EU's member states concerns.

The Armed Forces contribute substantially to the strengthening of the national defence capacity, aimed at ensuring territorial integrity, sovereignty, unity, indivisibility, independence of Romania, as well as the security of the Romanian people. It also, develops actions to increase the efficiency of national crisis prevention and management systems, internal and external, military or civil. It contribute to the mechanisms and capabilities to combat asymmetric and hybrid threats, capable of ensuring state resilience in emergency or crisis situations and enabling the continued functioning of essential institutions and services.

As the National Defence Strategy of Romania, 200-2024 reveals, Romanian Army act in order to develop the capacity to respond to the new challenges of the security environment, but also increase resilience, including through active measures to prepare the population and territory for defence. It is done through developing immediate response capabilities, able to carry out deterrence and defence tasks against a possible aggression, until the intervention of the main national and/or allied forces. In this context, one of the outmost task is "to strengthening NATO's deterrence and defence posture in the Black Sea area" (2. p. Romanians White Book n.d.).

After 2018, NATO has reinforced the maritime posture and has taken concrete steps to improve the overall maritime situational awareness. Moreover, the Alliance has "prepared strategic assessments on the Black Seas" (Brussels Summit Declaration 11-12 July 2018) and agreed to strengthen the Alliance's deterrence and defence posture in all domains. This topic has been underlined constantly through the Romania demarches at NATO HQ. Ministry of defence, in 2018, asked for a coherent approach, at strategic level, to the presence from the entire eastern flank, "including in the Black Sea region, from the perspective of planning, training, conducting exercises and exercising the act of command" (NATO n.d.). As a result, Allied defence decisions, taken at the Brussels Summit in 2018, substantially reflect national objectives, with "a focus on strengthening the Allied presence on the Alliance's eastern flank, including the Black Sea" (Bruxelles n.d.).

Ensuring the security in the Black Sea region by deepening partnerships with NATO's riparian states, as well as cooperation with NATO partners in the region has recognized by our allies. In one of his declaration, in 2018, the British Defence Secretary stressed, "Romania is a factor of regional stability and has a substantial contribution to ensuring security in the Black Sea and Western Balkans region" (Britanie n.d.).

Another thread of work in the recent years is the continuation to reinvigorate our culture of readiness. As part of our efforts, Armed Forces continue to ensure that Romania has the full range of capabilities and forces that are trained, interoperable, deployable, and ready to meet all national and allied requirements. We are part of the NATO Readiness Initiative (Britanie n.d.), launched at Brussel Summit that ensures more high-quality, combat-capable national forces at high readiness.

As a collective effort, "the NATO Readiness Initiative will further enhance the Alliance's rapid response capability, either for reinforcement of Allies in support of deterrence or collective defence, including for high-intensity warfighting, or for rapid military crisis intervention, if required. It will also

promote the importance of effective combined arms and joint operations". (Declaration 11-12 July 2018)

Another thread of effort regards the highest priority given to the contributions to command and control through the NATO Force Structure. Romania develop land command and control capacity at corps, division and brigade-level on its territory "to contribute to reinforcement planning in the region." (Bruxelles n.d.). That approach is fully-covered by the implementation of the force structure resulting from the "Strategic Defence Analysis 2020".

Our ability to meet the challenges of a changing security environment is underpinned by an array of robust, sophisticated, and evolving capabilities across all domains, including heavier, more high-end, fully supported and deployable, sustainable, and interoperable forces and capabilities that are held at high readiness to perform the whole range of Alliance tasks and missions. In this context, Romania ensure "at least 20% of the defence budget for the procurement of military technology" (Bruxelles n.d.) and develop of modern, highly operational capabilities fully interoperable with allied and partner forces to ensure the fulfilment of constitutional missions.

CONCLUSIONS

In the light of the future evolution of the strategic environment, which attests the challenges and threats from potential adversaries and their increased exploitation of the battlefield complexity, some priorities are emerging to ensure that the Romanian military power enhances its strategic relevance.

Maintain the relevance of strategic functions. Intervening, deterring, preventing, protecting and anticipating remains the essential displays of the armed force strategic relevance.

Do not sacrifice quantity to quality anymore. The time of the armies reduced at minimum is ending, and the increase of the potential adversary capabilities proliferate the lethality and attrition toward our forces. After years of constant reduction, the armed forces have begun to recover based on 2% budget allocation. It must continue to do so, which in turn will allow them to have modern and adequate equipment, thus putting an end to "temporary" capacity disruptions that affected its operational efficiency.

Increase autonomy and resilience. The growing challenge to control common areas will profoundly challenge the permanent availability of a joint support. Whether it is about fire support, intelligence and targeting or mobility, armed forces need to increase their autonomy in order to continue to fulfil their operational missions. They will also need to rethink their resilience and survivability in the challenged environment by reinvesting in their ground-to-air defence, cyber and electronic defences, and by giving greater importance to the concealment.

Rethinking the joint towards a multi-domain. The evolution of the future strategic environment will transform the nature of the joint operations. The resulting synergies, however, cannot be substitutes and thought as possible further reductions. The autonomy of each force category will give an increase possibility to the mutual support inter-domain, and therefore a certain capacity redundancy is needed as a guarantee of security. To do so, the Armed Forces will need to have advanced means of deep-sea strikes, target acquisition, and enhance their links with Special Forces and cyber-offensive assets.

Do not lose sight of the human. As long as people live on earth and war is the product of human activities, armed forces will remain strategic.

To accomplish its strategic tasks the Romanian Armed Forces require being reliable among its allies and partners, but especially deterrent-credibility in the face of its opponents. At a crucial time when is evident the end of strategic comfort, it must more than ever hold its leadership of the defence domain and reaffirm, in the eyes of all, its ability to respond in the physical environment and in the human field, and that it is fit to the strategic challenges of the future.

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